5   **CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1   1.   A method for managing specimen data among specimen collection facilities, said
2   method comprising:
3   receiving a specimen report from a client terminal; and
4   processing the specimen report in accordance with a facility identifier
5   corresponding to the specimen collection facility at which the client terminal is located,
6   said processing including storing the specimen description in association with the facility
7   identifier in a network accessible data storage device.

1   2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the specimen report comprises a specimen description
2   including sensor-based specimen data, said method further comprising processing the
3   sensor-based specimen data in accordance with a prioritization algorithm to determine a
4   priority level.

1   3.   The method of claim 2, further comprising initiating an instant messaging session in
2   response to the determined priority level.

1   4.   The method of claim 2, further comprising storing prioritization keywords in
2   association with the prioritization algorithm.

1   5.   The method of claim 2, further comprising forwarding data received in the specimen
2   report to at least one of the specimen collection facilities in accordance with the
3   determined priority level.

1   6.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2   storing a resource rating in association with at least one of the client terminals;
3   and
4   delivering data received in the specimen report to at least one of the client
5   terminals in accordance with the resource rating.

7. A system for managing specimen data among specimen collection facilities, said system comprising:

means for receiving a specimen report from a client terminal; and

processing means for processing the specimen report in accordance with a facility identifier corresponding to the specimen collection facility at which the client terminal is located, said processing including storing the specimen description in association with the facility identifier in a network accessible data storage device.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the specimen report comprises a specimen description including sensor-based specimen data, said system further comprising means for processing the sensor-based specimen data in accordance with a prioritization algorithm to determine a priority level.

9. The system of claim 8, further comprising data storage means for storing prioritization keywords in association with the prioritization algorithm.

10. The system of claim 8, further comprising means for forwarding data received in the specimen report to at least one of the specimen collection facilities in accordance with the determined   priority   level.

11. The system of claim 7, further comprising:

data storage means for storing a resource rating in association with at least one of the client terminals; and

means for delivering data received in the specimen report to at least one of the client terminals in accordance with the resource rating.

12. A computer program product residing on a computer-readable medium for managing specimen data among specimen collection facilities, said computer program product having computer-executable instructions for performing a method comprising:

receiving a specimen report from a client terminal; and

processing the specimen report in accordance with a facility identifier corresponding to the specimen collection facility at which the client terminal is located,

7   said processing including storing the specimen description in association with the facility

8   identifier in a network accessible data storage device.

1   13. The computer program product of claim 12, wherein the specimen report comprises a

2   specimen description including sensor-based specimen data, said method further

3   comprising processing the sensor-based specimen data in accordance with a prioritization

4   algorithm to determine a priority level.

1   14. The computer program product of claim 13, wherein said method further comprises

2   initiating an instant messaging session in response to the determined priority level.

1   15. The computer program product of claim 13, wherein said method further comprises

2   forwarding data received in the specimen report to at least one of the specimen collection

3   facilities in accordance with the determined priority level.

1   16. The computer program product of claim 12, said method further comprising:

2   storing a resource rating in association with at least one of the client terminals;

3   and

4   delivering data received in the specimen report to at least one of the client

5   terminals in accordance with the resource rating.

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1   17. A method for managing specimen data reporting among specimen collection

2   facilities, said method comprising:

3   receiving a specimen report from a client terminal, wherein the specimen report

4   comprises a specimen description including specimen image data; and

5   processing the specimen report in accordance with a facility identifier

6   corresponding to the specimen collection facility at which the client terminal is located,

7   said processing including storing the specimen description in association with the facility

8   identifier in a network accessible data storage device.

1   18. The method of claim 17, wherein said storing the specimen description in association

2   with the facility identifier comprises copying the specimen description data into one or

3   more file directories having directory names corresponding to the facility identifier.

1   19. The method of claim 18, wherein the one or more file directories are represented as

2   graphical user interface folders.

1   20. The method of claim 17, wherein said storing the specimen description in association

2   with the facility identifier comprises associating the specimen description with the

3   facility identifier in one or more database records.

1   21. The method of claim 18, wherein the specimen image data is contained in one or

2   more digital image files, said copying the specimen description into one or more file

3   directories further comprising copying the one or more digital image files into a digital

4   image library directory, the digital image library directory having a directory name

5   corresponding to the facility identifier.

1   22. The method of claim 17, wherein the received specimen report further includes a

2   priority level indicator, said method further comprising processing the received specimen

3   report in accordance with the priority level indicator.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the priority level indicator included with the specimen report is selected from among priority level indicia representing levels of urgency associated with the specimen report, said processing the received specimen report in accordance with the priority level indicator comprising triggering an audio alert signal in accordance with the level of urgency represented by the priority level indicator included with the received specimen report.

24. The method of claim 22, wherein said processing the received specimen report in accordance with the priority level indicator comprises storing the specimen report in association with the priority level indicator in a network accessible data storage device.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein said storing the specimen report in association with the priority level indicator comprises associating the priority level indicator with the specimen report in one or more database records.

26. The method of claim 17, further comprising assigning a priority level designation to the received specimen report.

27. The method of claim 26, further comprising:

determining an epidemiological threat level in accordance with the specimen description; and

assigning the priority level designation to the received specimen report in accordance with the determined epidemiological threat level.

28. The method of claim 26, further comprising delivering an alert message to at least one other specimen collection facility, wherein the alert message includes the specimen description associated with the facility identifier and the priority level designation.

1   29. The method of claim 28, further comprising, responsive to said delivering an alert

2   message to at least one other specimen collection facility, storing an alert message status

3   record.

1   30. A system for managing specimen data reporting among specimen collection

2   facilities, said system comprising:

3   means for receiving a specimen report from a client terminal, wherein the

4   specimen report comprises a specimen description including specimen image data; and

5   processing means for processing the specimen report in accordance with a facility

6   identifier corresponding to the specimen collection facility at which the client terminal is

7   located, said processing including storing the specimen description in association with the

8   facility identifier in a network accessible data storage device.

1   31. The system of claim 30, wherein said processing means for processing the specimen

2   report in accordance with a facility identifier comprises means for copying the specimen

3   description data into one or more file directories having directory names corresponding to

4   the facility identifier.

1   32. The system of claim 31, wherein the one or more file directories are represented as

2   graphical user interface folders.

1   33. The system of claim 30, wherein said processing means for processing the specimen

2   report in accordance with a facility identifier comprises means for associating the

3   specimen description with the facility identifier in one or more database records.

1   34. The system of claim 31, wherein the specimen image data is contained in one or

2   more digital image files, said means for copying the specimen description into one or

3   more file directories further comprising means for copying the one or more digital image

4   files into a digital image library directory, the digital image library directory having a

5   directory name corresponding to the facility identifier.

35. The system of claim 30, wherein the received specimen report further includes a priority level indicator, said system further comprising means for processing the received specimen report in accordance with the priority level indicator.

36. The system of claim 35, wherein said means for processing the received specimen report in accordance with the priority level indicator comprises means for storing the specimen report in association with the priority level indicator in a network accessible data storage device.

37. The system of claim 36, wherein said means for storing the specimen report in association with the priority level indicator comprises means for associating the priority level indicator with the specimen report in one or more database records.

38. The system of claim 30, further comprising means for assigning a priority level designation to the received specimen report.

39. The system of claim 38, further comprising:
    means for determining an epidemiological threat level in accordance with the specimen description; and
    means for assigning the priority level designation to the received specimen report in accordance with the determined epidemiological threat level.

40. The system of claim 38, further comprising means for delivering an alert message to at least one other specimen collection facility, wherein the alert message includes the specimen description associated with the facility identifier and the priority level designation.

41. The system of claim 40, further comprising means responsive to said delivering an alert message to at least one other specimen collection facility, for storing an alert message status record.

1   42. A graphical user interface including a display and a selection device for generating

2   and delivering a specimen report, said graphical user interface comprising:

3   a specimen image window for obtaining and viewing a specimen image;

4   a capture sample object for capturing the specimen image displayed in the

5   specimen image window;

6   a text description data entry field for describing the specimen image; and

7   a specimen report delivery object for triggering network delivery of the specimen

8   image in association with the text description.

1   43. The graphical user interface of claim 42, further comprising at least one threat

2   severity threat indicator objects for associating an estimated threat severity to the

3   specimen report.

1   44. A graphical user interface including a display and a selection device for generating

2   and delivering a specimen alert report, said graphical user interface comprising:

3   at least one facility selection object for selecting one or more facilities to which

4   the specimen alert report will be transmitted;

5   at least one priority indicator for indicating the priority level of the specimen alert

6   report; and

7   a text field for inputting a narrative description in association with the specimen

8   alert report.

1   45. The graphical user interface of claim 44, wherein said facility selection object

2   comprises one or more objects associated with corresponding one or more specimen

3   collection facilities.

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